

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

A280.347
M343P
1965

AD-33 Bookplate
(1-68)

NATIONAL

**A
G
R
I
C
U
L
T
U
R
A
L**



LIBRARY

**A280.347
M343P
1965**

86144

POULTRY INSPECTION-

U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY

JUL 15 1965

C & R-PREP.

A History of Its Development

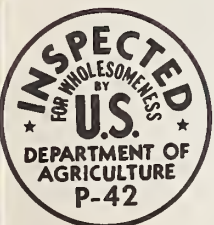


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
CONSUMER AND MARKETING SERVICE

POULTRY DIVISION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

JUNE 1965



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Consumer and Marketing Service
Washington, D. C. 20250

June 1965

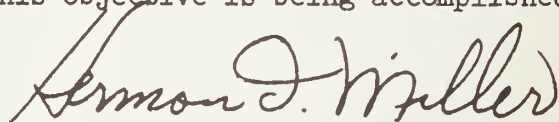
To: Poultry Division Employees

From: Hermon I. Miller, Director, Poultry Division

Subject: Poultry Inspection - Its History and Development

This publication was first made available in 1961 to provide a record of the history and development of poultry inspection through the period of activity which was largely on a voluntary basis. The intent in publishing this was to make it available to Poultry Division employees in order to acquaint them with this background and also to record this bit of history for succeeding generations.

The Poultry Division is very proud of the progress made by the poultry inspection program since it became a mandatory program. Constant efficiencies in operations have been experienced without affecting the integrity of the program. The aim of such a program is to provide the consuming public with a wholesome food product at a minimum cost to the taxpayer. It would appear that this objective is being accomplished.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Hermon I. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "H".

HISTORY OF POULTRY INSPECTION

The first move toward Government poultry inspection occurred in 1926. During the early 1920's, trainloads of live poultry were arriving each week in New York City from Midwestern States. The poultry was loaded in special cars which had living quarters for an attendant and facilities for watering and feeding the poultry enroute. Attendants accompanying these cars were experts in their field and took pride in bringing their poultry great distances with little loss in weight. Competition along this line was encouraged by bonuses paid to the attendants and became so intense that various shady methods of feeding began to evolve. Practices used were those such as feeding ingredients to bind the lower intestinal tract, followed by feeding salt to encourage heavy water consumption just prior to unloading. Another practice was to feed corn heavily just prior to unloading. Many of these practices resulted in the poultry being sick by the time it reached the local slaughter houses.

By early 1926, the New York City Department of Health was taking an active interest in these practices from a public health standpoint. This, together with the losses local buyers suffered after the cars were unloaded and the poultry had lost the artificially induced weight, resulted in a request to the U. S. Department of Agriculture to establish an inspection program in New York City for live poultry.

The Federal Poultry Inspection Service was inaugurated on November 15, 1926. In the beginning, it consisted of inspection of live poultry at the railroad terminals and poultry markets in and around New York City. This inspection was conducted under an agreement between the U. S. Department of Agriculture (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) and two cooperating agencies --the New York Live Poultry Commission Merchants Association and Greater New York Live Poultry Chamber of Commerce.

The poultry inspection services of the U. S. Department of Agriculture are performed by authority of the Congress. During the early years of poultry inspection, authority for the service was contained in the annual appropriation acts for the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The first regulations covered the inspection of live poultry and were contained in Service and Regulatory Announcement No. 103 published under the authority of an act of Congress making appropriation for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1927, approved May 11, 1926 (44 Stat. L. 499, 523), or any future act of Congress conferring like authority: "For enabling the Secretary of Agriculture to investigate and certify to shippers and other interested parties the class, quality, and/or condition of cotton and fruits, vegetables, poultry, butter, hay, and other perishable farm products, when offered for interstate shipment or when received at such important central markets as the Secretary of Agriculture may from time to time designate, or at points which may be conveniently

reached therefrom, under such fees as will be reasonable and as nearly as may be to cover the cost of the service rendered: Provided, That certificates issued by the authorized agents of the Department shall be received in all courts of the United States as prima facie evidence of the truth of the statements therein contained."

The live poultry inspection work accomplished two purposes. The principal purpose was to determine, by palpation, the average amount of feed in the crops of a sample of birds in each railroad car or truck prior to unloading and delivery to the live poultry buyers. If the amount of feed in the crops was found to be in excess of the amount permitted, the poultry would be held for reinspection. Cars of poultry were not permitted to be unloaded until they passed inspection. This inspection was also for the purpose of determining that certain prohibited materials were not included in the feed on the morning of unloading.

The other purpose of this live poultry inspection was to remove and to destroy for food purposes all sick poultry found at the time of inspection.

By 1935, rail shipments of live poultry, which had reached a peak of 200 million pounds in 1930, were sharply cut. In part, this was due to the development of year around broiler production in areas nearby New York City and to a reduction in demand. Lessening demand was the result of the fact that many consumers formerly buying live poultry slaughtered under local religious officials were now able to buy poultry which was slaughtered outside of the city but which was acceptable under religious dietary laws. Live poultry inspection was discontinued in 1935.

The first Federal poultry inspection for eviscerated poultry was a voluntary program supplied in 1927 to a large soup company in the East. It was requested because the Canadian Government required that canned poultry products shipped into Canada be accompanied by a Federal export certificate attesting that the product had been officially inspected and had been found to be wholesome.

During 1927, only one plant used the new inspection service developed by the Department. However, in 1928, New York City followed the lead of Canada by requiring that canned poultry products sold in that city be officially inspected. To meet these requirements, five additional plants requested poultry inspection from the Department. Thus, by the end of 1928, six plants were operating under the voluntary poultry inspection program. During that year, 3,150,423 pounds of poultry were inspected, 11.72 percent of which was condemned as unfit for food. In subsequent years, the percentage of inspected poultry condemned was markedly decreased since canners under inspection soon found that it was not profitable to present inferior quality poultry for inspection.

The story of the development of inspection of poultry and poultry products is interwoven with the history of the explosive growth of the chicken and

turkey meat industry during the past twenty years. The processing, packaging, and marketing fields have been hard pressed to keep pace with the progress made in the production field. Processors and equipment manufacturers have been constantly alert for innovations that would improve processing efficiency. The role of the Poultry Division has been to develop inspection regulations which are broad enough to permit changes of economic significance in processing techniques but which at the same time protect the integrity of the product.

In developing the rules and regulations governing the inspection of poultry, USDA personnel established a basic procedure to assure that the purpose of Congress, expressed in the enabling legislation, was carried out. There were five basic steps in this procedure:

1. Preliminary draft of the proposed regulations by the office administering the program. This draft was forwarded to key persons in the industry for review and comment.
2. A second preliminary draft incorporating such changes as appeared appropriate after consideration of comments received. This draft was given wide circulation both directly and through trade papers.
3. Announcement of hearings to be held in various areas if it appeared that such hearings would develop new and pertinent information.
4. Issuance of proposed regulations with request for comments.
5. Issuance of the regulations to become effective on a date generally thirty days after publication.

Amendments to the regulations governing the inspection of poultry were published from time to time under authority provided each year by an act of Congress making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture. The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 and the Poultry Products Inspection Act of 1957 contain the authority under which present day regulations are issued.

During the early years, canning plants received a very large percentage of inspection service being furnished. The sale of ready-to-cook poultry, as such, was just beginning to be developed. Prior to 1928, practically all slaughtered poultry sold in the United States was sold "New York dressed." Actually, the development of the poultry inspection service accompanied the development of the market for ready-to-cook poultry, since poultry cannot be inspected for wholesomeness except at the time of evisceration. It was not until 1945 that the amount of poultry inspected for sale as ready-to-cook poultry exceeded the quantity inspected for use in canned poultry products.

The growth of the inspection service during the years 1928 to 1940 was largely the result of the New York City Poultry Ordinance. During this period, much progress was made in the development of regulations, procedures, and criteria governing the inspection work. On July 1, 1940, there were approximately 35 plants operating under inspection. In that year, 76.3 million pounds of dressed poultry were inspected. The percentage of condemnation was 1.64 percent.

World War II made a heavy impact on the poultry industry. During the war years, poultry inspection expanded greatly and the groundwork was laid for extensive changes in the regulations governing poultry inspection. Military needs for poultry proved greater than the industry could supply and at the same time take care of civilian demand. New plants were built and unused ones were reactivated to provide facilities for the rapid increases in broiler production. Military specifications required either Veterinary Corps or U. S. Department of Agriculture inspection of all poultry products. The number and variety of plants applying for USDA poultry inspection made it necessary to establish printed guidelines for the expanded inspection staff. Most of the military purchases of poultry during the war, however, consisted of dressed poultry. At first, acceptance inspection of the frozen dressed poultry was made at the point of delivery. It soon became obvious that the most careful examination at this point would not prevent some unsatisfactory product reaching the mess halls. The next step by the military was to survey processing plants and limit bidding to plants which were approved.

During the years between the close of the war and 1950, poultry production continued to expand. Commercial broiler production almost doubled, increasing from 366 million head to 631 million head. The turkey crop increased from 43 million head to 44 million head. Hundreds of new processing plants sprang up. Owners of established plants using the Federal-State Inspection and Grading Service began to press the Department to develop regulations covering sanitary requirements for slaughtering, dressing, chilling, and packing, in addition to those covering post-mortem inspection. The experience of the military during the war years was also instrumental in causing a re-evaluation of the regulations by the Department.

A complete revision of all the poultry inspection and grading regulations was published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on November 15, 1949, under the title "Regulations Governing the Grading and Inspection of Poultry and Domestic Rabbits and Edible Products Thereof and United States Specifications." This document consolidated three separate sets of regulations and eight different standards and grades for poultry.

Two entirely new provisions were incorporated in the consolidated regulations and became effective on July 1, 1951:

1. The grading and grade labeling of ready-to-cook poultry were permitted only when the poultry had been inspected for wholesomeness under the Department's inspection program or an official inspection system approved by the Department.
2. Sanitary requirements became applicable to poultry dressing operations, and only poultry processed in compliance with these requirements could be inspected.

The new regulations were favorably received by processors, and the Department was frequently called upon to survey plants and examine drawings of plants to be built. Impetus to this was added by the increasing amount of inspected, ready-to-cook poultry being purchased by the military. Dressed poultry processors could scarcely afford not to have their plants approved when approval became a prerequisite for selling their product to most plants processing ready-to-cook poultry.

The poultry inspection activities during the war made the poultry industry and the consuming public much more inspection-conscious than before. Recognition of the sales value of the inspection mark was increasing continuously, and although the full costs of inspection were borne by the users of the service, the poultry inspection service continued to grow. More and more retailers acquired holding facilities for frozen ready-to-cook poultry, and dressed poultry began to be a thing of the past. Demand for inspected food products such as frozen poultry pies was also increasing.

During the early years of poultry inspection, most of the poultry was slaughtered and plucked in dressing plants and shipped from those plants as dressed poultry. The eviscerating and canning plants purchased the dressed poultry, usually from brokers, for evisceration and further processing. There was no opportunity in such cases to examine the live poultry or to observe the conditions under which it was slaughtered and dressed. Information was rarely available as to where the dressed poultry presented for inspection had been slaughtered. However, during the 1940's, there was a trend toward moving the eviscerating operations to the dressing plants, or building new combination dressing and eviscerating plants in order to combine these two operations into one continuous dressing and eviscerating operation. By 1950, this development in the poultry industry had reached the point where it was considered to be practicable to issue regulations governing the sanitary conditions under which poultry was to be slaughtered and dressed. Sanitation inspection was furnished in dressing plants which applied for such service and which met the sanitary requirements. Eviscerating plants operating under inspection were not permitted to receive dressed poultry for eviscerating unless it had been slaughtered in an official plant. By the end of the year 1950, 155 plants were operating under inspection and a large number of dressing plants were receiving

sanitation inspection. During the calendar year 1951, 690 million pounds of dressed poultry were inspected for wholesomeness at the time of evisceration. By the end of the year 1954, 260 plants were operating under inspection, and in that year, over a billion pounds of poultry were inspected for wholesomeness. Most of the increase since 1945 has been in inspected poultry prepared for sale as ready-to-cook poultry.

By 1955 the military began purchasing only ready-to-cook poultry. Civilian supplies, except for a few areas, consisted almost entirely of eviscerated poultry.

The turkey industry had changed almost entirely to an inspected ready-to-cook basis by 1955. A relatively small proportion of the ready-to-cook broilers were inspected, however. Less than one-fourth of the plants processing broilers were operating under inspection. These plants were chiefly shipping poultry through export outlets or supplying markets, such as New York City, which required inspection by a system approved by the city.

About this time, Congressional leaders began to notice public interest in the wholesomeness of poultry. The Poultry Products Inspection Act of 1957 was the result of many hearings with consumer, industry, and governmental groups. This Act, requiring all slaughtered poultry moving in interstate or foreign commerce to be inspected, did not become fully effective until January 1, 1959.

The Secretary assigned responsibility for administering the Act to the Poultry Division of the Agricultural Marketing Service. The experience gained during the years 1927 through 1957 in developing and applying inspection techniques and criteria was of great value in the preparation of the regulations required for administering the compulsory inspection service.

The Poultry Products Inspection Act

Development and Issuance of Regulations

Following passage of the Poultry Products Inspection Act, the Poultry Division, AMS, began immediately on the work of drafting tentative regulations required to administer the new program. Tentative regulations were reviewed in detail at three preliminary meetings during September 1957. The first meeting was with the area and circuit field supervisors of the inspection service; the second was attended by the executive secretaries of national, regional, and State poultry industry associations; and the third was with a small specially-selected group representing the various segments of the poultry industry, the Public Health Services, and the Food and Drug Administration.

After analyzing the suggestions received during these initial meetings, the tentative regulations were redrafted and sent to users of the inspection and grading services and others who requested copies.

Twelve regional meetings were held in various locations throughout the country during October. At these meetings, the tentative regulations were reviewed and comments and views of those attending were solicited. About 750 persons attended these meetings, and it was quite evident that the industry and others greatly appreciated the opportunity of learning about the new law and proposed regulations and of expressing their views concerning the program.

The views expressed at the meetings and in correspondence were carefully considered and many were incorporated into the formally proposed regulations which were published in the FEDERAL REGISTER on November 22, 1957.

Interested persons were given a 30-day period during which to comment on the proposed regulations. In developing the regulations under the Act, the Poultry Division staff carefully reviewed the Act, as well as the legislative history, in order to determine the purpose and intent of the legislation. In developing various parts of the regulations, the Division analyzed from the standpoint of (1)--Is this section necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of the Act? and (2)--Is there authority for this provision in the legislation? After consideration of the comments received, the regulations were published in the FEDERAL REGISTER in final form, to become effective at the time inspection service was to be provided under the new Act.

The first regulations governing inspection under the Act were published in the FEDERAL REGISTER of February 5, 1958, to become effective May 1, 1958. This part of the regulations covered only the requirements for inspection at the plant level. Additional portions of the regulations were added during the spring and summer of 1958 to cover those phases of the program which would go into operation on January 1, 1959. This was the date on which all poultry and poultry products moving in commerce, unless exempted, were required to be inspected under the Act. Provisions added included those covering exemptions, the handling of imports, and the type and extent of records required.

Many of the official establishments which had previously been operating under the voluntary service made application for and received inspection under the Poultry Products Inspection Act during May 1958. Additional establishments, including some new ones, applied for and received inspection under the Act later in 1958. Other establishments continued to receive voluntary poultry inspection service, under the authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act, during that year. This was primarily because of the fact that, under the regulations governing the voluntary program,

establishments could, under specified conditions, prepare some poultry products without inspection. This is not permitted under the Poultry Products Inspection Act. On December 31, 1957, there were 352 plants operating under the voluntary program. On December 31, 1958, just prior to the time when the Poultry Products Inspection Act became fully effective, the total number of plants under inspection had increased to 400. During the calendar year 1958, a total of over two billion pounds of ready-to-cook poultry was inspected for wholesomeness under the two programs.

Many schools for new inspectors were held during the year 1958, not only to prepare personnel for inspection work during that year, but also to have trained inspectors available for the great expansion to come. The program for on-the-job training was also given much emphasis and attention.

The task of furnishing inspection during 1959, and especially during the early months of that year, was a real challenge. It involved the inauguration of service in hundreds of new plants. It also involved the education of plant employees and plant management in procedures required in new plants under inspection. At the same time, these plants were often staffed with comparatively new inspectors who required close supervision. There were also many plant surveys still to be made in 1959, and a great deal of training of inspectors and supervisors to be done. There were new inspectors and supervisors at all levels. Naturally, difficulties were encountered, but the manner in which this challenge was met and the great effort which was made to accomplish the purposes of the Inspection Act will long be remembered with pride.

The Department established an Advisory Committee on Criteria for Poultry Inspection which is composed of 12 poultry pathologists from various State Agricultural Colleges. The committee meets annually with the Poultry Division staff and serves as experts in evaluating the most recent research in evaluating poultry diseases. They also review and advise on matters connected with criteria for judging the wholesomeness of poultry and poultry products under the poultry inspection program.

During the calendar year 1964, a total of 2.1 billion head of chickens, turkeys, and ducks was inspected under the Poultry Products Inspection Act. This represented approximately 88 percent of the poultry sold off farms. Nearly 6.6 billion pounds of ready-to-cook poultry were certified as wholesome. Ante-mortem condemnations amounted to 20 million pounds, live weight, and post-mortem condemnations amounted to 193 million pounds, dressed weight. These figures are released in the report of "Poultry Slaughtered under Federal Inspection," issued by the Crop Reporting Board, Statistical Reporting Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Organization - 1965

Inspection Branch, Poultry Division

The Poultry Products Inspection Act is administered by the Inspection Branch of the Poultry Division, Consumer and Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, under the direction of the chief of the Inspection Branch. There are two assistant chiefs, one of whom supervises field offices; the other supervises the Pathology, Laboratory, Facilities, Poultry Products, and the Regulatory Sections.

Pathology Section.--Provides technical advice and assistance to the Branch and participates in the development of policies and procedures pertaining to pathological processes affecting poultry and domestic rabbits. Evaluates research reports, studies and appraises the results of analysis made on ingredients, compounds, poultry and poultry products, and prepares concise reports to be used as aids by Division staff members and inspection personnel. Directs and coordinates the execution of approved policies as they relate to procedures followed when releasing decharacterized condemned product as animal food. Reviews and maintains a current Inspectors' Handbook and distributes current Handbook material to the field.

Laboratory.--Directs the physical and biological laboratory work of the Branch including the study of diseased tissue, analysis of ingredients or materials used in the preparation of poultry products, analysis of compounds used in official plants, analysis of poultry tissues and poultry products to determine their freedom from adulteration with physical or biological agents and other tests aiding in the development and maintenance of sound inspection procedures and practices. Provides technical advice and assistance to other units of the Division, Federal and State organizations, the industry and related trade groups. Develops laboratory methods and procedures and directs the sampling activities of products from the field to determine the acceptability controls. Develops criteria for instructions, procedures and techniques governing the ante-mortem inspection of poultry and post-mortem inspection of poultry carcasses. Issues guides concerning poultry diseases and the disposition of diseased poultry carcasses. Maintains liaison with livestock disease control authorities at all governmental levels and public health agencies on matters relating to poultry diseases transmissible to man.

Facilities Section.--The Facilities Section participates in developing over-all policy and programs with respect to plant facilities and equipment. In connection with its responsibility for approving blueprints, it gives technical advice in the fields of processing plant construction, sanitation, and equipment used in the processing of poultry and domestic rabbits and their edible products. It develops procedures, techniques, instructions, and memoranda of interpretation relating to plant facilities and equipment, buildings, premises, and related items involving the maintenance of sanitary conditions and requirements in official inspected establishments.

Poultry Products Section.--The Poultry Products Section has responsibility for the development of policies and procedures in connection with the re-inspection and the supervision of further processing of ready-to-cook poultry and its edible products. It also has responsibility for label and formula approval and for developing the inspection service requirements on these items.

Regulatory Section.--The Regulatory Section plans, develops, and directs a program to determine compliance with the provisions of the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and related laws, rules, and regulations, particularly dealing with interstate shipments of dressed poultry and poultry products, with importations of poultry products, and with exemptions. To assist in exercising this function, one or more regulatory poultry products inspectors are stationed in each of five areas of the United States. Their responsibility includes investigation of complaints, irregularities, and other reports of alleged or apparent violations of the Act and regulations.

The Regulatory Section reviews applications for exemptions and approves or disapproves them, according to the provisions of the Act and the regulations. The Poultry Products Inspection Act provides exemptions to three general categories of persons. Those excluded from the provisions of the Act are:

1. Poultry producers who sell only poultry raised on their own farms and sell directly to household consumers or restaurants, hotels, and boarding houses for use in their own dining rooms or in preparation of poultry for sales direct to consumers only.
2. Retail dealers who sell directly to consumers in individual retail stores where the only processing operation performed by such retail dealers is the cutting up of poultry products on the store premises.
3. Persons slaughtering, processing, or otherwise handling poultry or poultry products which have been or are to be processed as required by recognized religious dietary laws. However, these persons are exempt only to the extent that the Secretary of Agriculture determines necessary to avoid conflict with such religious dietary laws while still effectuating the purposes of the Act.

The Regulatory Section approves or disapproves the importation of poultry products. Poultry products, to be eligible for importation into the United States, must be prepared in a foreign country whose system of poultry inspection has been determined to be the equivalent of, or superior to, that maintained in the United States.

Field Supervision.--Supervision of inspectors in the field is handled through area supervisors. There are five area offices: Philadelphia, Atlanta, Des Moines, Dallas, and San Francisco. These area supervisors are responsible to the chief of the branch and to the assistant chief who works closely with the field offices. It is the responsibility of the field offices to supervise operations within the officially inspected plants located in their geographical areas. The offices are also responsible for conducting surveys of new plants which apply for service and for checking and recommending approval of blueprints and plant facilities if in accordance with the regulations. Each office is responsible for the handling of personnel problems and fiscal matters in its area.

Inspection for wholesomeness of poultry is performed within the States and Territories of the United States by poultry inspectors stationed at the various approved plants. A lot-by-lot ante-mortem inspection is conducted at each plant which slaughters poultry and a bird-by-bird post-mortem inspection is made at the time of evisceration. Those birds unfit for human consumption are removed from the processing lines and condemned. Those found to be satisfactory are permitted to continue down the line for completion of the processing operation, cooling, and then packaging. Inspectors also are responsible for the enforcement of sanitation requirements of the regulations. They make sure that only dressed poultry or poultry products that have been prepared in approved establishments are permitted to enter the plant and that all other requirements of the regulations are being fully met. They also make sure that only labels or other markings which have been approved by the Poultry Products Section are used on products prepared at official plants. Each package must bear a label that includes the true name of the product, the net weight, the name and address of the packer or distributor, the plant number, a statement of ingredients if fabricated from more than one ingredient, and the official inspection mark.

A veterinary inspector-in-charge supervises inspection activities in a poultry eviscerating or processing plant whose operations are limited in scope, or he may be in charge of one of several shifts at a larger plant.

A veterinary station supervisor is in charge of inspection activities within a station which may consist of a large plant or two or more smaller plants located within reasonable distance.

Veterinary inspectors-in-charge and veterinary station supervisors are responsible to the area supervisor or his assistants. Each area supervisor has an assistant and one or more technical supervisors who travel throughout the area performing over-all supervision.

